

**Abstract 194**

**TITLE:** Evaluating HIV Prevention Efficacy for Women: The WINGS Project

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**BACKGROUND/OBJECTIVES:** To examine the longitudinal effectiveness of two prevention strategies (communication and condom skills training) on protected sex in a sample of 510 community women ages 17 to 61 with at least one risk factor for acquiring HIV.

**METHODS:** Baseline, 3-, and 6-mo. Post-intervention interview data were gathered from women in three cities participating in a randomized trial of a six-session, group skill-building intervention to reduce their risk for HIV and STD. Structural equation modeling evaluated intervention effectiveness for two intervention pathways: 1) through condom skills and 2) through peer group communication. This analysis was conducted for the entire sample and for three subgroups categorized by age, single or multiple partners, and history of childhood sexual abuse. The final dependent variable was the odds ratio of protected to unprotected sex at each follow-up compared to baseline.

**RESULTS:** The treatment pathway from experimental status to condom skills to protected sex ratio was effective in reducing unprotected sex for the group as a whole ( $X^2$  difference = 33 df=2),  $p<.05$ ) as well as for all subgroups. The communication skills pathway was effective for the group as a whole ( $X^2$  difference = 98, df=3,  $p<.05$ ) but only effective for participants under 30 and participants who reported childhood sexual abuse. The size of all treatment effects pathways diminished at 6 months.

**CONCLUSIONS:** WINGS demonstrates that condom skills training is an effective way of reducing unprotected sex for a heterogeneous group of women at risk. Further research needs to examine how such skill training for women translates into use of condoms by male partners. To increase the duration of intervention effects, booster sessions may need to be incorporated into risk-reduction programs.

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